Direct Certification for School Year 2012-2014

Private and Parochial Schools using STN Method

Many if not most of you (Parochial Schools) were not able to effectively utilize Direct Certification last year because of changes in the state's reporting requirements for Accredited Non-Public schools. With the previous DOE-PE report no longer mandatory in the 2010-2011 school year, most of you got "no data" when you attempted to do Direct Certification with the "STN Method". This past year, that situation has been remedied with the State's new DOE-EM (Nonpublic **E**nrollment & **M**obility) Report. "[All] state accredited nonpublic schools (including freeway schools) and non-state accredited nonpublic schools participating in the Choice Scholarship Program, must complete the required Spring collection, beginning on May 4, 2012, and ending on June 29, 2012. These schools "must submit data on **all** students enrolled at any time during the 2011-2012 school year." If you've completed the required DOE-EM report, STN Direct Certification should work for you as long as you entered ALL your students as required, not just voucher recipients.

We've made a few enhancements this year to the interface. We've collected various functions together to hopefully make the process easier to follow. The files created have not changed in any way however and you should have no problems completing functions that you have been familiar with in prior years. While the site has been tested and functions well, there will be more minor changes in the near future to improve usability even further. Documentation will be revised as needed.

Login as always to the Application Center https://ac.doe.in.gov

If you don't have a login or can't remember your password, check with your principal or the diocese education office. DOE does not maintain logins for individual accounts.

Once you login, click on "Programs" and then "School Foods and Nutrition"

If you cannot access this menu, confirm with your local administrator that your Application Center login is assigned to the **Direct Certification/Verification group**. New for this year… all tasks have been conveniently grouped under one section. No more clicking around from Data Transfer, to Lookup, to Administration on the top menu.

Clicking on **School Foods and Nutrition** will bring up this new tabbed interface:

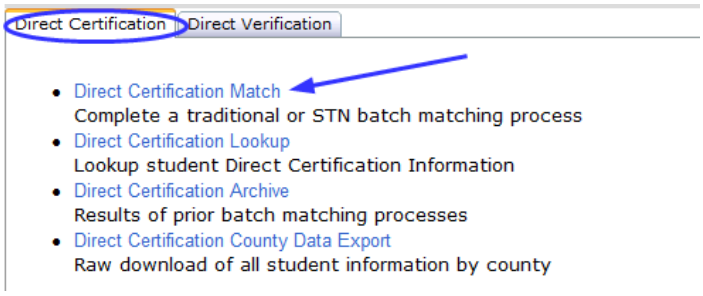
Since our current topic is Direct Certification, please note the circled Direct Certification tab. This tab contains all the functions that you need to perform any Direct Certification task. You should be in this tab by default. Please note however the Direct Verification tab. The functions grouped there will be useful after October 1, when you are conducting the USDA required Verification activities.

Briefly looking at the functions contained on the Direct Certification tab:

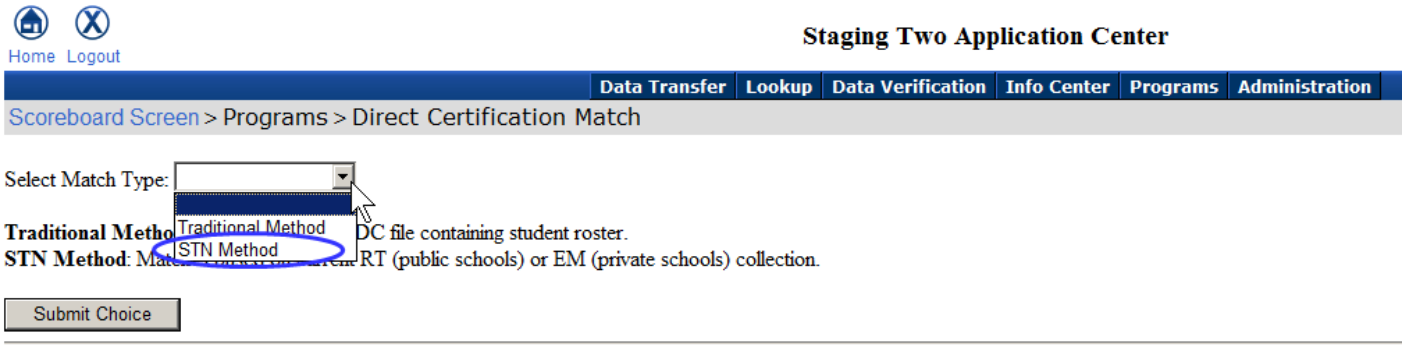
- Direct Certification Match-- Here's where you'll process a new set of matches, using either the Traditional Method, or the easier STN Method. Remember… USDA regulations require that you conduct Direct Certification at least three (3) times a year. We recommend doing it (1) as early in the summer after July 1 as possible, prior to distributing applications, (2) immediately prior to the start of Verification activities, in late September, and (3) before the beginning of the second semester in mid year. There are however powerful advantages to doing it monthly and we have features that make this extremely simple to do.
- Direct Certification Lookup—This feature allows the looking up of an individual student, by either Food Stamp/SNAP case number, Student Name and Information, or Parent Guardian Information. The search features are essentially unchanged from prior years.
- Direct Certification Archive-- The results of prior matches can be found here. By locating them here, the processing of new matches has a cleaner interface.
- Direct Certification County Data Export-- Most of you won't use this feature, at least not yet. There are however Point of Sale systems on the market by private companies that can do the matching process on their own. This new feature allows you to download the raw data used by the matching process for the county or counties your students come from. Your software vendor would need to understand the data format and probably modify their software to use this data. Have them contact John Todd.

We'll now discuss the Direct Certification Matching process by choosing the first choice on the tab, click Direct Certification Match.

Processing your Direct Certification Matches

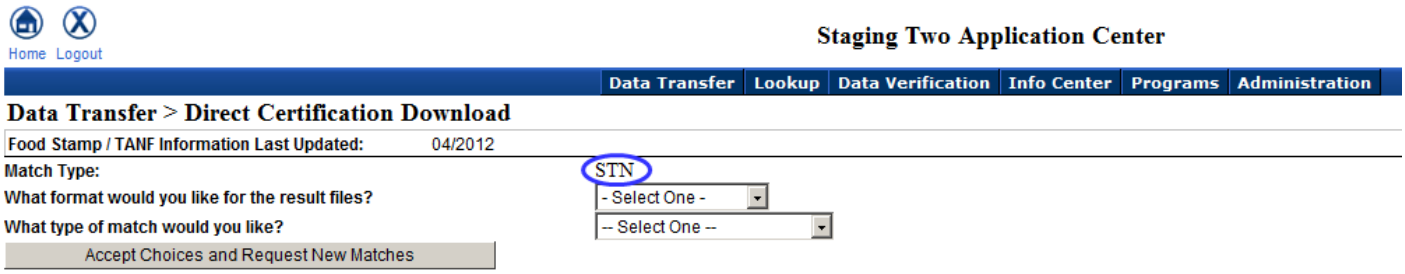


On the next screen select “STN Method”

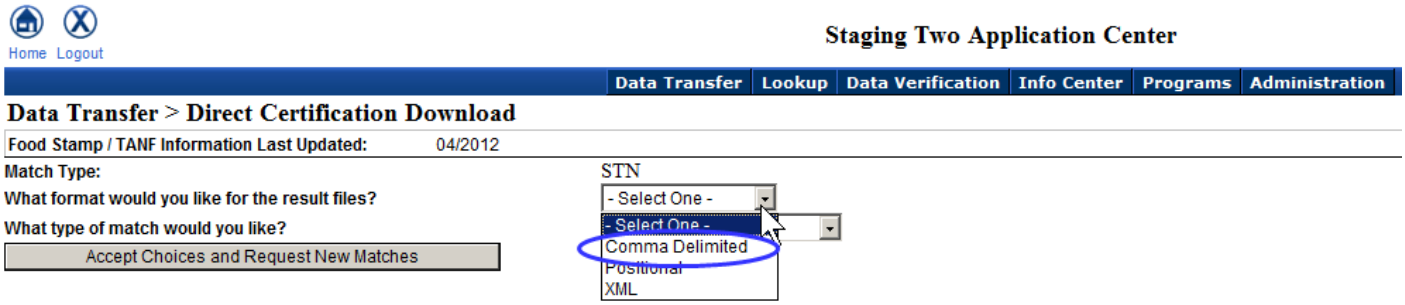


Before you can proceed you need to click “I Agree” after reading this information.

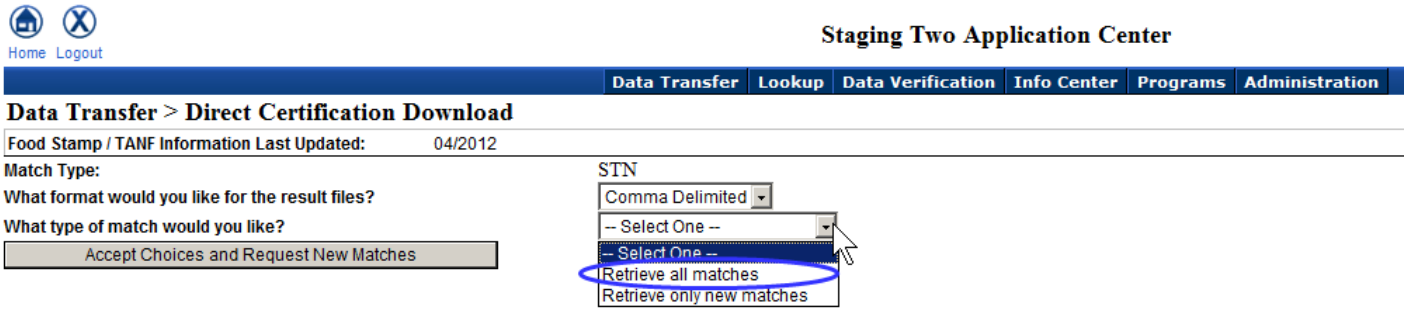
Once you click I agree, you'll see this screen. You've already selected STN as the matching method, so there are two remaining choices:



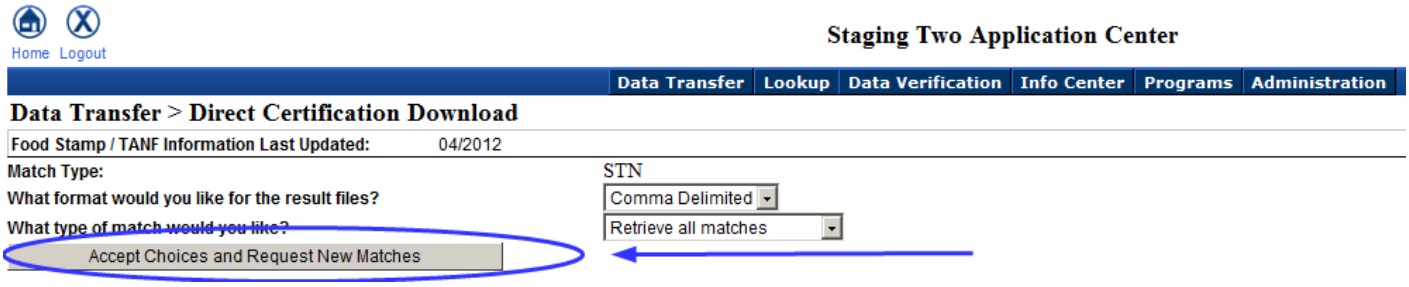
Most of you will probably select "Comma Delimited". By choosing this you will normally be able to view the results as an Excel spreadsheet, depending on how your local PC is set up.



When conducting Direct Certification for the first time for any school year, you'll want to select "Retrieve All Matches". When you conduct Direct Certification the other two required times (or more frequently), you can select "Retrieve only new matches". If this is selected later in the year, the lists produced will only contain new names of eligible students not found on previous lists.



Click “Accept Choices and Request New Matches”



At this point, the screen should look like this. The computer is now working silently in the background for you. The Processing notations mean it’s doing the work.

Just stare at the screen (or maybe refill your coffee cup.) In just a minute you’ll see the 3 “pocessing” notations replace with something like this:

These are “hyper links” that you can click on to retrieve your results. By clicking on each of the links, you’ll in most cases open up an Excel spreadsheet with student’s names and other information on each row. Like last year, there are three lists:

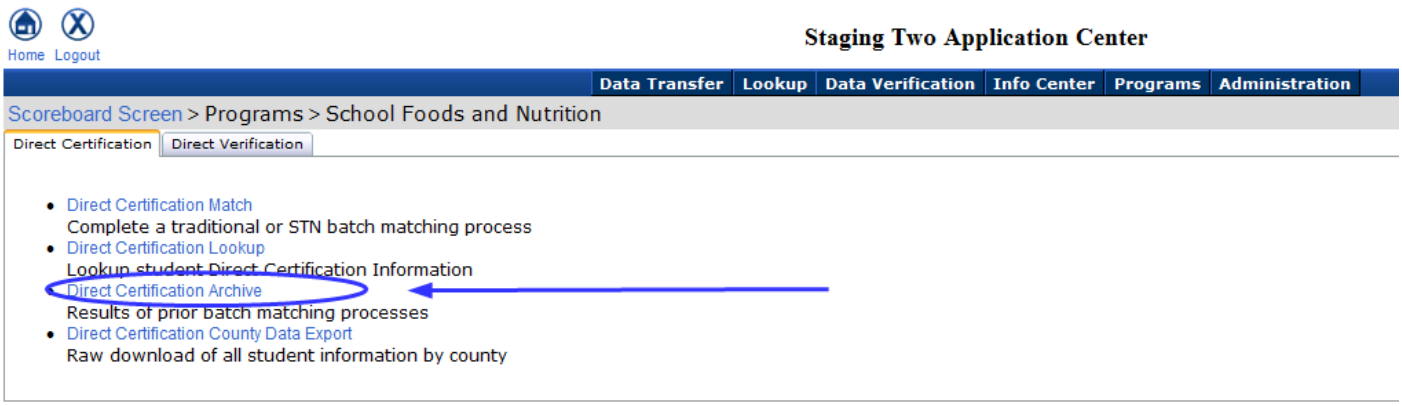
Standard Match: Most of these can automatically be considered valid matches if the student returns to school this fall. These were matches on First Name, Last Name, County, and Date of Birth. Remember that the EM report that is being matched against, contains students from the spring and not all will return. Look in column “V”. Most will say “H” for a hard/exact first name match. At the bottom of the list you may have

values of “S” for a soft/sound alike match. In these cases the first names in “G” and “H” may vary slightly. Column “G” contains your value for the students first name, column “H” is what Food Stamps or TANF has for the students first name. (Example La Quisha, LaQuisha, L’Quisha.)

Unmatched Siblings Match: (that’s a mouthful!) This list contains other students that are not known to attend your school, but are in the same food stamp or TANF case as the students in the first list. Look here for baby sisters or brothers that may be entering your school this year, but were not on last springs EM report.

No County Match: This list contains students that matched on first name, last name, date of birth, but NOT on county. For parochial schools using the DOE-EM report, we do not actually know county of residence for each student. We know the county of the school they attend. Food Stamp and TANF benefits are issued by the county of residence however. So, let’s say you’re a parochial school on the west side of Evansville, Vanderburgh County. Many of your students may in fact live in Posey County or perhaps Gibson County. Since there would be a mismatch on the counties for these students you can expect to find them here rather than the Exact Match list. If you are a school in Evansville and find a student in the No County Match List from Fort Wayne (Allen County), it’s probably not your student, unless you know firsthand that the student moved over the summer. It’s just a coincidence of a student with the same name and birthdate living in a different part of the state. We give you the Parent’s name also so you have clues to make the right determination.

That’s about it. Save the spreadsheets for audit purposes or future reference. Just remember, if you need to download the results of any past “Direct Certification” processing run, just go to the Archive, and all your past jobs will be there for review, including the one that you just did, which will be at the top of the list.



Best of luck in the upcoming season. Use direct certificaiton at least three times in the year to stay in compliance and use it more frequently to maximize the benefit received. Student's economic circumstances change throughout the year.

For questions, please contact the State Agency.

APPENDIX A-File Layout for STN Method Direct Certification

File Specification for Direct Certification data uploads and downloads

The purpose of this data collection is to expedite the application for the eligibility of the USDA Free Lunch benefit program. Instead of the traditional eligibility requiring a parent to fill out a paper application, direct certification allows the state agency to match school district enrollment with food stamp or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, the successor to AFDC) recipients and "directly certify" students for free lunches. Direct certification is an administrative time saver and may identify students who would otherwise not be identified. Additionally, direct certification records are excluded from the routine auditing process.

Audience:
Participation in Direct Certification is voluntary for public schools, accredited nonpublic schools, and charter schools at this time. Several corporations are currently participating in this data collection project. This will be a mandatory collection by the 2007-2008 school year.

Although the student data collected may already exist in the Application Center, the timing of this collection and the data contained is based solely on the data provided by the user. Certification starts earlier each year, therefore the rollover of student data from elementary to junior high, etc must happen at the local level.

Instructions:
The required data should be collected, combined into a file, and submitted to the Department of Education through the Application Center.

The collection period will begin on July 5, 2006 and will be available till the end of December 2006. During this time you can submit the file to retrieve any matches by the traditional match or by Student Test Number (STN). Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year the data will be updated once a month with current data from FSSA. Also starting this school year, the files will include the STN number.

References:
For more detailed information on Direct Certification and explanation of Traditional and STN Match, please review the following document:
http://doe.state.in.us/food/schoolnutrition/cnpbenefitforms.html

Direct Certification Data Layout – OUTPUT

Field Order	Fieldname Description	Length	Data Field Specification and Requirements	Notes
1	School Submitted County	2	Data Type: Numeric Valid Range: 00-99	
2	School submitted Corporation Number	4	State Assigned corporation number	
3	School Number	4	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Valid Range: 'A' through 'M' (non-public) and '0' (zero) through '9'	
4	School-Submitted Corporation Student ID	15	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Valid Range: A-Z, 0-9, Special Characters	This field is for corporations that use a student ID for their own purposes other than the STN Number.
5	STN	9	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric 9-digit Student Test Number	
6	School-Submitted Student Last Name	25	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z, ' (apostrophe), / (slash), - (hyphen), space	
7	School-Submitted Student First Name	20	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z, ' (apostrophe), / (slash), - (hyphen), space	
8	ICES Student First Name	20	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z, ' (apostrophe), / (slash), - (hyphen), space	
9	School-Submitted Student Middle Name/ Middle Initial	15	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z	
10	ICES Student Middle Name/ Middle Initial	15	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z	

11	School-Submitted Suffix	3	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z	
12	School-Submitted Birth Date	10	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric MM/DD/YYYY where MM = Month, DD = Day, and YYYY = Year Valid Range: 01 <= MM <=12 01 <= DD <=31 1900 <= YYYY <= 2099	
13	School-Submitted Address – Street	30	Data Type: Alpha Numeric Valid Range: A-Z, (period) ., ‘ (apostrophe), / (slash), - (hyphen), Valid Range: Space 0-9	
14	ICES Address – Street	30	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Valid Range: A-Z, (period) ., ‘ (apostrophe), / (slash), - (hyphen), Valid Range: Space	
15	School-Submitted Address - City	20	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z, space	
16	ICES Address - City	20	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z, space	
17	School-Submitted Address - State	2	Two-Letter State Abbreviation Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: A-Z	
18	School-Submitted Address - Zip Code	9	Data Type: Numeric Valid Range: 0-9	
19	School-Submitted Social Security Number	9	Data Type: Numeric Valid Range: 0-9	
20	ICES Case Number	16	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Valid Range: A-Z, 0-9, space	
21	ICES Assistance Type	1		
22	Hard/Soft Match	1	Data Type: Alpha Valid Range: H, S	Indicates whether the match was exact
23	Certification Date	10	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric MM/DD/YYYY where MM = Month, DD = Day, and YYYY = Year Valid Range: 01 <= MM <=12 01 <= DD <=31 1900 <= YYYY <= 2099	

24	School-Submitted Grade Level	2	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Allowable Codes are: PK=Pre-Kindergarten KG=Kindergarten 01=Grade 1 02=Grade 2 03=Grade 3 04=Grade 4 05=Grade 5 06=Grade 6 07=Grade 7 08=Grade 8 09=Grade 9 10=Grade 10 11=Grade 11 12=Grade 12 13=Grade 12+/Adult	
25	Guardian Last Name	25	Data Type: Alpha	
26	Guardian First Name	20	Data Type: Alpha	
27	Guardian Middle Name/ Middle Initial	15	Data Type: Alpha	

28	Guardian Whole Name	35	Data Type: Alpha	
29	Match Month	2	FSSA Data used in matching names was current as of this Month.	
30	Special Match Characters	8	Data Type: Alpha-Numeric Valid Range: A-Z, 0-9, space *This optional field allows you to classify records into user specific categories	

Direct Certification XML OUTPUT Data Layout

<XIF_DCData> <Corporation Id=""> <School Id="">
<Student STN="" > <Name Last="" First="" IcesFirst="" Middle="" IcesMiddle="" Suffix=""> <Address
Street="" IcesStreet="" City="" IcesCity="" State="" Zip=""> <Birth Date=""> <DirectCertificationInfo
GradeLevel="" County="" SSN=""> <SchoolUse StudentID="" GuardLastName =""
GuardFirstName="" GuardMiddleName=""
GuardWholeName="" STN=””> <IcesMatchInfo
CaseNumber="" AssistanceType="" MatchType=""
CertDate="" Matchmonth=”” MatchChar=”” > </Student>
</School> </Corporation> </XIF_DCData>

Change History

Version	Change History
08.14.06	Field 30 changed to field 21 on the input file.
06.02.06	Field 30, Special Match Characters added to the input and output file.
07.06.05	Corrected XML tags Corporation ID and School ID on the input file
06.22.05	Field 29, STN removed from the OUTPUT file. Field 5 was also STN number.
05.13.05	Match Month, field 30, added to the output file.
05.03.05	Data layout changed to include STN Number, Audience added, Instructions added
05.21.03	Original layout